Roxbury, Nov. 12, 1872.

My dear Wendell:

A sympathizing letter from you to your mother, and your telegram to William, have just been received. Your solicitude to get all the particulars as to the extent of William's and George's losses by the terrible fire which has laid the beauty and pride of Boston in ashes is brotherly, as also your offer to render them what service you can in this trying hour. I think their names have not appeared in print as among the sufferers; but I believe Frank informed you, in his Sunday evening letter, that they were both burnt out, saving nothing but their accounts. They bear their calamity well, though it now seems probable that they will not get more than half their assurance. Yesterday morning William and his partner (Mr. Rodliff) succeeded in hiring a corner of a spacious room (on the second flight) of a first-class warehouse in Chauncy St.,

three or four doors from Mary G. Chapman's residence, close up to which the fire did its destructive work without injuring her house. They put out their "shingle" at once, nothing daunted, and in the evening Rodliff took the train for New York to make purchases of wool. That is a sample of the spirit which upholds and energizes the sufferers generally.

Bailey & Jenkins were swept clean, not saving even their account books, through a singular neglect to watch the progress of the flames. Their loss must be heavy, while their insurance was quite insufficient. As William loaned them the $25,000 he obtained of the Eastern Railroad Company, it is painfully uncertain how far they will be able to refund it. But they have considerable property outside of their wool business; and being honorable men, they will no doubt secure William against serious loss on their account.

We are all feeling very sadly on account of poor George, especially as it seems to postpone his marriage indefinitely, and burdens him with a debt which will press heavily upon his mind. But he shall be welcome to the thousand dollars I loaned him, and William will generously waive the payment of a much larger sum to any extent, though needing what is due him in consequence of his own losses. Of course, the box business ends in smoke and ashes, and cannot be "saved even as by fire." We are not sorry that he is out of it; but, as you say, it is not a very desirable way to have it closed. What George will essay to do remains to be seen. His chance, now that the business of the city is so fearfully paralyzed, to obtain a salaried position here, is anything but favorable. New York he greatly dislikes; and the chances are that he will conclude to "go West," though what he can do there, Heaven only knows.

Love to dear Lucy and father and mother, and kisses for the children.

Your loving Father.

The ruins of the fire excite overwhelming emotions as one gazes upon them. It will take a long time to clear them up, preparatory to building other structures. The direct pecuniary loss is probably not less than one hundred millions of dollars; the indirect will be scarcely less. Twelve hundred business firms are involved in the calamity, and tens of thousands of persons at home and abroad to a greater or less extent. But you will find all the particulars in our city papers.

You and dear Mrs. McKim must not fail to be with us at Thanksgiving. We shall need you all the more by what has happened, as a measure of relief in the matter of heartfelt communion. Thanks for your generous supply of chestnuts. Your mother is better.